

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PHNOM 00722 131258Z

51

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SY-04 INRE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 AID-05 OMB-01 IO-10

DPW-01 SAJ-01 ACDA-05 SR-02 ORM-01 /079 W

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O P 131145Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8906

INFO CINCPAC HONOLULU HI IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY SAIGON PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L PHNOM PENH 0722

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MOPS, CB

SUBJ: TWELFTH AND THIRTEENTH DAYS OF KC DRY SEASON OFFENSIVE

REF: PHNOM PENH 652

1. SUMMARY. THE MOST SERIOUS PROBLEM AT THE PRESENT TIME IS AROUND THE CITY OF NEAK LUONG ON THE LOWER MEKONG RIVER. THE SITUATION IN AND AROUND PHNOM PENH IS CALM, ALTHOUGH THE KC CONTINUE TO ROCKET THE CITY AND POCHENTONG AIRPORT. FANK OPERATIONS ON THE MEKONG'S EAST BANK OPPOSITE THE CITY AND ALONG ROUTE 1 PARALLELING THE MEKONG ARE MAKING VERY SLOW PROGRESS BUT FANK FORCES ON ROUTE 5 HAD SOME GOOD RESULTS. END SUMMARY.

2. ON JANUARY 12, THE KC FIRED THREE 107MM ROCKETS INTO PHNOM PENH, ONE DAMAGING THE HOUSE OF THE HEAD OF THE ICRC DELEGATION HERE, THE OTHER TWO LANDING CLOSE TO PHNOM PENH'S INDEPENDENCE MONUMENT. IN THE AFTERNOON OF JANUARY 13, TWO MORE 107MM ROCKETS LANDED IN THE SAME CENTRAL RESIDENTIAL AREA OF THE CITY, ONE BEHIND THE DCM'S RESIDENCE, THE OTHER NEAR-BY. SMALL NUMBERS OF KILLED AND WOUNDED RE-
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PAGE 02 PHNOM 00722 131258Z

SULTED FROM THESE ATTACKS. ALSO DURING THE LAST TWO DAYS,

TWELVE 107MM ROCKETS WERE FIRED AT POCHENTONG AIRPORT, BUT ALL THE PROJECTILES LANDED TO THE NORTH, CAUSING NO DAMAGE.

3. ON THE EAST BANK OPPOSITE PHNOM PENH, HEAVY FIGHTING CONTINUES AND ONE FANK POSITION FELL ON JANUARY 12, RESULTING IN TEN FANK SOLDIERS KILLED AND NINETY REPORTED WOUNDED. FRIENDLY FORCES HAVE BEEN REINFORCED BY ARMORED PERSONNEL CARRIERS. TO THE NORTHEAST OF THE CAPITAL, KHMER NAVAL INFANTRY TROOPS WITHDREW FROM TWO POSITIONS ON AN ISLAND IN THE MEKONG RIVER. THEIR WITHDRAWAL THREATENS PROGRESS BY OTHER FANK FORCES ON THE WEST BANK ALONG HIGHWAY 61.

4. FANK EFFORTS TO REDUCE THE 20 KILOMETER CUT ON ROUTE 1 ARE THUS FAR MAKING VERY LITTLE PROGRESS. THE KC, ALTHOUGH REPORTEDLY TAKING HEAVY CASUALTIES, CONTINUE TO APPLY HEAVY PRESSURE AGAINST THE CITY OF NEAK LUONG, 50 KILOMETERS SOUTHEAST OF PHNOM PENH. NEAK LUONG AND POSITIONS IN THE VICINITY ARE BEING SUBJECTED TO FREQUENT ATTACKS BY FIRE. SOME 20,000 REFUGEES ARE NOW IN NEAK LUONG AND THE CITY'S SMALL AIRPORT IS CLOSED TO FIXED WING AIRCRAFT. THE SITUATION REMAINS SERIOUS.

5. FIGHTING CONTINUES NEAR KOMPONG LUONG ABOUT 20 MILES NORTH OF PHNOM PENH ON ROUTE 5 (REFTEL) AND FARTHER NORTH AT THE GARRISON OF LOVEK. THE SITUATION IS NOT ENCOURAGEING BUT REPORTS ARE STILL SKETCHY ON THE ACTION THERE. SOMEWHAT FARTHER SOUTH, A 7TH DIVISION CLEARING OPERATION ALONG ROUTE 5 RESULTED IN SOME 50 KC KILLED.

6. THE SITUATION AROUND PHNOM PENH REMAINS STABLE AND THE POPULATION WITHIN THE CITY ITSELF REMAINS CALM, DESPITE THE ROCKET ATTACKS. ONE INDICATOR OF RELATIVE STABILITY IS THAT MARKET PRICES HAVE REMAINED STEADY THROUGHOUT THE OFFENSIVE THUS FAR.
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